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AUTHOR Bales, Barbara L.
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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the need to build instructional capacity in high poverty, low performing schools using Title I funding and integrate the corresponding federal policy requirements with state teacher education policies to allow states and districts to develop locally designed partnerships with alternative certification agencies. It recommends building instructional capacity by allowing alternative certification programs to place certified and qualified teachers into high-poverty, low-achieving schools using Title I funding. Two interrelated strategies that alternative certification programs need for building instructional capacity in high poverty schools include cultivating programs that certify teachers' content knowledge and providing those teachers with pathways to develop the pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge needed to improve the quality of their instruction. The paper suggests specific policy recommendations for holding alternative certification programs accountable to state performance-based teacher standards and student assessment results. Implementation issues that influence such efforts include time (quality teachers are needed immediately) and concentration of alternatively-certified teachers in already high-poverty, low-performing schools. (Contains 43 references.) (SM)

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Barbara L. Bales

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University of Wisconsin, Madison

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Title I Funding, Alternative Teacher Certification Programs, and State Teacher Standards

Barbara L. Bales
University of Wisconsin, Madison

The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing and Development and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards establish critical benchmarks of excellent teaching. As teacher educators, we have shaped our certification programs redesigning or adding courses and extending our clinical experiences to meet these benchmarks. Lost in this professional restructuring, however, is our recognition of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions candidates bring to our programs. Looking across traditional 4- and 5-year teacher education programs, as fine as they are, it appears we have fallen into the age-old classroom trap of "teaching to the middle". We may have forgotten the importance of differentiating our curriculum to meet the needs of our students. In addition, "we continue to seek evidence that any one structural model of teacher education is superior to others and ignore the wide range of quality that exists within all models" (Zeichner & Schulte, 2001, p. 280).

A possible consequence of this situation is that we turn away valuable prospective teachers because our traditional certification programs are too long, not flexible enough to allow candidates to maintain their current jobs or don't recognize the pedagogically relevant skills they bring to the program. In the meantime, many urban and rural schools have shortages of quality

teachers (see for example, Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000a; United States Department of Education, 2001b) and our critics rightfully challenge us to find us alternative paths to teacher certification

Some believe alternative routes to certification and licensing attract large numbers of highly qualified, talented and enthusiastic individuals into teaching (e.g., Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000b). Others view alternative certification programs as attempts to "move toward less professional education and toward the deregulation of teacher education" (Stoddart & Floden, 1996, p. 82). Although many states have adopted policies incorporating performance-based teaching standards, such as the INTASC Model Standards (United States Department of Education, 2001c), they are not used to evaluate teachers who receive certification through alternative routes prior to employment.

The paper constructs an argument to build instructional capacity in high poverty, low performing schools using Title I funding and integrating the corresponding federal policy requirements[1] with state teacher education policies to allow states and districts to develop locally designed partnerships with alternative certification agencies. At the same time, I will suggest specific policy recommendations for holding alternative certification programs accountable to state performance-base teacher standards and student assessment results. These two sets of accountability standards have the potential to narrow the gap in student achievement between traditionally prepared and alternatively certified teachers.

Student Achievement and Instructional Capacity

A recent press release from the United States Department of Education states, "more than half of the nine states reporting three years of assessment data on mathematics and reading

[1] Title I is a component of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which has the more common title, "No Child Left Behind".

showed increases in the number of disadvantaged students performing at or about state-set proficiency levels. Five of these states also narrowed the achievement gap between high- and low-poverty schools" (United States Department of Education, 2001a). While this is good news for students in these five states, these data are lost when aggregated with students in the remaining forty-five states. Data collected from the latest nationally administered National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) still reveals a wide disparity between high- and low-poverty schools, "The gap in reading performance between nine-year old students in high and low-poverty schools stands at 40 points. the gap in math performance for the same age group is nearly 30 points" (United States Department of Education, 2001a).

Despite continual efforts, through Title I funding and other federally sponsored programs, this gap in student achievement has remained relatively static or in some cases widened. This long-standing gap in student achievement provided some of the impetus for requiring yearly assessments of student learning in states receiving Title I funds. As educational researchers, we know that student assessments can only measure what students have learned and that "students learn best what they are taught" (Porter, 1998, cited in National Research Council, 1999, p. 178). So what barriers limit children's academic achievement in these high-poverty schools?

While many factors influence student achievement, a school's instructional capacity is a central component of student learning. Corcoran and Goertz (1995) suggest policy makers conceptualize instructional capacity as "high-quality instruction" (Corcoran & Goertz, 1995). Teacher expertise, "what teachers should know and be able to do" (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, 1992), determines how lessons are crafted. Effective lesson designs draw on teachers' subject matter knowledge, utilize the pedagogical tools specific to a given subject area, and connect to students' lived experiences. This teacher knowledge base

supports student learning and shapes the quality of that learning. More importantly, it is this professional expertise that connects quality teachers to student learning and holds teachers responsible to their students and the public for that learning.

These teacher characteristics are positively correlated with high student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000b; Ladson Billings, 1995; Newmann, Secada, & Wehlage, 1995; Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, 1999). For example, teachers, certified to teach mathematics and science, have a statistically significant positive impact on student test scores relative to teachers who hold either private school certification or are not certified in their subject area (Corcoran & Goertz, 1995; Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000b; Monk, 1994; United States Department of Education, 2001b). Results from an outlier study of elementary and middles schools in New York City reveals, "differences in teacher qualifications accounted for more than 90% of the variation in student achievement in reading and mathematics at all grade levels tested" (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 9). In addition, students are less likely to dropout when faculties include a greater percentage of certified teachers teaching in their field, even when teacher qualification is independent from student poverty, school size, and location (Fetler, 1999).

Other research highlights the linkage between teachers' course work in content areas and the central role of pedagogical content knowledge to student achievement (Ingersoll, 2001; Monk, 1994). These teachers of record[2] "tend disproportionately to teach in lower performing schools" (Hirsch, et all, 2001; see also National Center for Education Statistics, 1997), which underscores the importance of having certified teachers teaching in their area of expertise.

[2] 'Teachers of Record' refers to the person assigned to a particular section/classroom and may or not be a certified or licensed teacher.

Time and time again, research has shown students performing at low levels of academic achievement are not afforded the benefits of these teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Ferguson, 1991; Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000b; Gordon & Bonilla-Bowman, 1996; Greenwald, Hedges, & Laine, 1996; Haberman, 1999; United States Department of Education, 2001a). For students exposed to poor quality teachers over time, this effect is cumulative (Sanders & Rivers, 1996).

It seems obvious that poor quality teachers, teachers who cannot draw on their subject matter knowledge, knowledge of how their students learn, utilize the pedagogical tools specific to a given subject area, or are knowledgeable about the distinctive cultural backgrounds of their students, deny students access to the knowledge required for the newly mandated assessments. Thus, the impact of poor quality teachers can be correlated with unequal schooling opportunities that result in low student achievement. Clearly these students are educationally disadvantaged.

The converse of these facts sends a strong message; high levels of student achievement are positively correlated with teachers who are certified and are teaching in their area of expertise. If the nation's educational goal is to raise the lower levels of student achievement, programs must be implemented to ensure these students have certified teachers with a degree in the field to be taught. As Darling-Hammond notes, "The nation's ability to place highly-qualified teachers in all classrooms will depend on proactive policies that increase both the quantity and quality of teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 2).

However, the cadre of traditionally prepared teacher candidates continues to mirror the common description of teachers, young, white, middle-class women who want to teach within 50 miles of where they grew up, in schools similar to those they attended (Haberman, 1996; SRI International, 1999). Thus in the strictest economic sense, teacher shortages are a recruitment

problem. This problem is exacerbated by the call for a reduction in class size. As Zeichner & Schulte (2001) point out,

> Given the severity of current teacher shortages in urban and outlying rural schools throughout the United States and continuing shortages of qualified teachers in certain fields like mathematics, science, bilingual education, and special education, it is clear that traditional teacher education programs in the 1,300-plus colleges and universities that prepare teachers will not be able to address the problems by themselves (Zeichner & Schulte, 2001, p. 280).

The longevity and severity of this problem demands we examine policy strategies for alternative certification and licensing.

The Nature of Alternative Teacher Certification Programs

The phrase 'alternative certification' program suggests agencies other than institutes of higher education (IHEs) offer certification programs leading to state teacher licensing. Currently alternative routes to licensure can originate from educational agencies (e.g., Wisconsin's Cooperative Educational Service Agencies), entrepreneurs (e.g., Teach for America), individual school districts (e.g., Madison School District's "Grow Your Own" program), as well as schools, colleges and departments of education (e.g., Kentucky's Teacher Opportunity Program). These programs are often prompted by a local need, sanctioned by state governments, and offer a more direct route to teacher licensure (SRI International, 1999; Stoddart & Floden, 1996; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001).

Given this more direct route, alternative certification (AC) programs appear to "move toward less professional education and toward the deregulation of teacher education" (Stoddart & Floden, 1996, p. 82). AC programs tend to offer training more akin to the apprenticeship programs in trades such as plumbing or computer repair than traditional teacher education programs. As a result, these programs are often viewed as deterrents to the teacher

professionalization movement that has occurred over the past three decades. Others believe alternative routes attract large numbers of highly qualified, talented and enthusiastic individuals into teaching (Wilson et. al, 2001). The controversy centers on what "teachers need to know in order to be effective instructors and about where and how they can best acquire that knowledge" (Stoddart & Floden, 1996, p. 83).

Despite this continued controversy, the number of alternative routes to certification is growing rapidly (Hirsch et al., 2001; SRI International, 1999; Stoddart & Floden, 1996; Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, 1999). Many are designed to recruit underrepresented populations into the teacher work force, placing recruits in areas with chronic teacher shortages particularly urban schools. Citing earlier work, Stoddart and Floden (1992) suggest these prospective teachers are

> older and more likely to be males from minority groups and to have transferred from other occupations. They also differ in their prior experience with and dispositions toward teaching in urban schools. The alternative-route teachers have more experience living and working in urban environments and are more interested in working in the inner cities (Stoddart & Floden, 1996, p 184).

Alternative routes to certification offer these candidates an opportunity to pursue teaching not available in more traditional settings. These recruits may potentially help meet the need of urban schools for teachers with knowledge of the characteristics of the learners and the educational contexts, both of which are among the types of teacher knowledge described by Shulman (1987) and others.

Alternative routes to teacher certification and licensing embrace a wide array of initiatives and programs, each with a central purpose and underlying assumptions about what constitutes effective teachers and where and how they best acquire that knowledge. Feistritzer (1997) completed a state-by-state analysis for the National Center for Education delineating eight

types of AC programs (Feistritzer, 1997). In 1999, SRI International reviewed several national and state AC programs. A summary of this information is found in Table 1.

Table 1. Select Examples of National and State AC Programs[3]

National Programs
Teach For America (TFA) Candidates are accepted after a rigorous screening process, must apply for employment in a "partnered school district." They then attend a "Professional Teacher Residency Program," which takes place over 2 years. The program incorporates professional development derived from standards-based associations such as the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, the National Board for Professional Teacher Standards, and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium. (Kopp, 1994)
Troops to Teachers (TTT) Established in 1992, the TTT program places discharged military personnel into classrooms. The program collaborates state education departments in an effort to place teachers in districts that need them most. Low-income districts receive funding to offset the teacher's salary. Teachers must agree to work in a Title I district with shortages for 5 years. (SRI International, 1999)

State supported Programs	Examples
Class A: reserved for those programs that meet the following criteria: • The program has been designed for the explicit purpose of attracting talented individuals who already have at least a bachelor's degree in a field other than education into elementary and secondary school teaching. • The program is not restricted to shortages, secondary grade levels, or subject areas. • The alternative teacher certification programs in these states involve teaching with a trained mentor, and formal instruction that deals with the theory and practice of teaching during the school year--and sometimes in the summer before and/or after.	New Jersey's Provisional Teacher Program (PTP)
Class B: Teacher certification routes that have been designed specifically to bring talented individuals who already have at least a bachelor's degree into teaching. These programs involve specially designed mentoring and formal instruction. However, these states either restrict the program to shortages and/or secondary grade levels and/or subject areas.	The Teachers for Chicago Program (TFC)
Class C: These routes entail review of academic and professional background, transcript analysis. They involve specially (individually) designed inservice and course-taking necessary to reach competencies required for certification, if applicable. The state and/or local school district have major responsibility for program design.	San Francisco Unified School District, Los Angeles Unified School District in collaboration with the local California State University
Class D: These routes entail review of academic and professional background, transcript analysis. They involve specially (individually) designed inservice and course-taking necessary to reach competencies required for certification, if applicable. An institution of higher education has major responsibility for program design.	Norfolk State University's Pathways to Teaching
Class E: These post-baccalaureate programs are based at an institution of higher education.	MAT Programs

[3] This table is an overview of information found in Teacher Development: A Literature Review (SRI, 1999). The report contains a detailed account of AC programs.

Although the number of alternative certification programs has increased, evaluations of their ability to recruit and supply quality teachers have been limited (Hirsch et al., 2001, Kwiatkowski, 1999, SRI International, 1999). It appears the evaluator's ability to delineate a program's ability to 'recruit and supply' from the issue of 'quality' is lost in the alternative vs. traditional teacher education program debate (Cochran-Smith, 2001). The following is an attempt to sort through the research addressing these two characteristics.

A review of the literature suggests AC programs can recruit non-traditional candidates into teaching and supply districts with newly certified teachers (Clewell & Villegas, 2001; Kwiatkowski, 1999; SRI International, 1999; Stoddart & Floden, 1996). Studies of teacher retention show a correlation between gender, ethnicity, education, and certification route to teacher retention in urban districts (SRI International, 1999). This suggests alternatively certified teachers are more resilient to the complex demands of working in urban settings although the SRI report limits this claim by noting, "most TFA members tend to leave the teaching profession" (SRI International, 1999, p. 81).

Research addressing the quality of AC teachers yields the subjective question "what constitutes a quality teacher?" Earlier we noted the importance of pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in defining teacher quality. Using these criteria, what does the research indicate about the quality of alternatively certified teachers? Referencing Cornett (1990), Kwiatkowski (1999) writes, "In Texas, alternative certification interns have higher pass rates on certification tests than do traditional education graduates" (Kwiatkowski, 1999, p. 6). Drawing on Goebel, Ronzcher, and Sanchez (1989), The Fordham Foundation's Manifesto (1999) states, "The few studies of alternative certification that have been

done find that students of such teachers perform at least as well as students of conventionally licensed teachers" (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, 1999, p.10).

Summarizing their review of Gomez and Stoddart (1991), Stoddart and Floden (1996) found, "significant differences in the pedagogical knowledge and instructional practices for teaching writing between novice secondary English alternate and traditional teachers"(Stoddart & Floden, 1996, p. 99). Reviewing studies comparing alternatively certified beginning teachers to traditionally-prepared teachers, Darling-Hammond (2000) notes, "Studies of teachers admitted with less than full preparation—with no teacher preparation or through very short alternate routes—have found. Recruits tend to be less satisfied with their training, have greater difficulties planning curriculum, teaching, managing the classroom, and diagnosing students' learning needs" (Darling-Hammond, 2000, p. 9). It is important to point out that none of these studies examines our bundle of teacher quality indicators.

Some research on AC programs suggests the "most effective alternative programs, judged in terms of teacher competence and retention, are generally longer term and involve considerable pre-service coursework coupled with supervised internships in a master teacher's classroom" (SRI International, 1999, p. 28). However, many AC programs lack this mentoring component (Darling-Hammond, 2000, SRI International, 1999; Stoddart & Floden, 1996). Wilson, Floden and Ferrini-Mundy (2001) in their review of teacher preparation research found, "teachers who have come through high-quality alternative routes and teachers traditionally certified show some similarities" (Wilson et al., 2001, p. 29). Again, longitudinal studies comparing student achievement in classrooms taught by alternatively certified teachers to traditionally prepared teachers have yet to be done.

Given this review of the literature, how might states and local school districts use Title I funding sources to partner with educational agencies and capitalize on the recruitment benefits of AC programs while minimizing any potential negative consequences associated with student achievement? The next section incorporates the knowledge base generated by this review and puts forward AC program recommendations using Title I policies and funding to increase the supply of alternatively certified teachers to needy states and schools.

Current Title I Policies and Funding Sources

Although the federal government's long-standing belief that schooling of children falls under the states' jurisdiction, Title I of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is the "principal embodiment of the national commitment to help educate economically and educationally disadvantaged children" (Jennings, 2000, p. 516). Children living in poverty are the recipients of Title I funding. While these children are often clustered in urban schools, they are also found in remote and rural settings. Test scores reveal that children in classrooms without the benefit of a certified and qualified teacher are clearly at an educational disadvantage. The correlation between low-performing schools and the lack of certified and qualified teachers exists. The residual and cumulative results of this deprivation on student achievement are clear.

The federal government, through Title I policy statements, acknowledges the relationship between quality teachers and student achievement with the statement, "All teachers hired under Title I must be highly qualified" (President George W. Bush, 2002). This same belief is illustrated in the Mathematics and Science Partnerships section of the law, "Math and Science Partnerships seek to encourage states, institutions of higher education, districts, and schools to form partnerships to improve student performance in math and science" (Robelen, 2002). These Title I policies and funding streams strike a balance between the federal government's financial

support for educationally disadvantaged children and policies allowing locally designed programs to meet unique instructional needs within state and school populations.

AC programs can help replace uncertified teachers of record with certified teachers. Having a certified teacher in classrooms in and of it self enhances the quality of instruction and should result in students being better prepared for mandated achievement tests. Title I of the newly authorized ESEA appears to contain language that appears to allow states and local districts to submit plans designed to develop, or procure, alternative certification programs to meet specific instructional capacity needs and improve student achievement. What type of alternative certification programs might encourage states to take advantage of Title I funding and help close the student achievement gap? As important, how can these AC programs be held accountable for the teachers they prepare?

Alternative Certification Programs to Build Instructional Capacity

This paper constructs an argument to build instructional capacity by allowing AC programs to place certified and qualified teachers in high poverty, low performing schools using Title I funding. Locally designed alternative certification programs support Title I core principles demanding improved teacher quality for high poverty students in under-performing schools. AC programs offer non-traditional routes to teacher licensure and can provide a supply of quality teachers to under-serviced areas.

Qualified teachers have three distinct characteristics: content knowledge, the pedagogical content knowledge associated with their teaching assignment, and connect lessons to their students' lived experiences. Quality teachers have completed appropriate course work in their content area and have participated in activities that develop the pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge needed for their content area.

These criteria suggest two interrelated strategies AC programs need to build instructional capacity in high poverty schools:

1. Cultivate programs that certify teachers' content knowledge and
2. Provide these teachers with pathways to develop the pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge needed to improve the quality of their instruction.

With respect to the need to cultivate programs, Title I policies and funding offers states and local districts an opportunity to build their instructional capacity. Replacing non-certified teachers of record with certified teachers is essential if students are expected to achieve new standards of learning. However, states and local districts often have specific instructional capacity needs and teacher shortages may occur in specific content areas. Locally constructed programs could be designed to accommodate specific personnel needs.

For example, a school district with a shortage of science teachers might develop an AC partnership offering coursework leading to science certification. In this situation, states developing partnership programs might be eligible for Mathematics and Science Partnership funds. This type of program and funding alignment could result with a local school district having certified teachers teaching in their field and increased student achievement. AC partnerships that direct certification opportunities to paraprofessionals in these schools may have the added benefit of tapping a pool of potential teachers already familiar with the students and the organizational structure of the school.

Placing a certified teacher in classrooms is a big step toward improving student achievement. However, being certified is not the end all of quality teaching. As we have seen, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge play a significant role in determining how well students learn. Thus the second strategy requires AC programs to provide pathways for

continued professional development to program participants. State education policies could mandate locally constructed AC programs to form partnerships with mentor and master teachers in the states, districts, and schools they service. The federal government has authorized 3.2 billion dollars for improving teacher quality through professional development, "money that can be used for a variety of purposes, such as providing professional development..." (Robelen, 2002, p. 29). Thus, schools and districts that tap this funding stream could develop AC partnerships that promote the attainment of pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge skills.

This type of AC partnership emphasizes the importance of professional development pathways and may assure a standard of quality in alternatively certified teachers. Professional development partnerships are bolstered by a similar Title II mandate directing Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education to form partnerships with local schools, districts and other educational agencies. Many current AC programs model this type of partnership (e.g., The DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund's Pathways to Teaching Careers Initiative, Milwaukee's Urban Teacher Network Program, and El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence).

AC Program Accountability

These recommendations encourage states and local districts to produce the instructional capacity needed to raise student achievement by establishing locally designed AC programs. Higher academic expectations as a goal, "continues to be connected to granting states and school districts greater flexibility in the use of [Title I] funds" (Jennings, 2000, p. 520). In exchange for this flexibility, AC programs should be held accountable to state performance-base teacher standards and student assessment results.

Performance-based teaching standards, such as the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing and Development, are part of most state teacher education and licensing policies (United States Department of Education, 2001b). These standards are designed to maintain a level of teacher quality. All teachers, regardless of their path to certification, should meet these standards. However, teachers are needed in classroom immediately. The AC programs I've outlined are designed to put certified teachers in classrooms first then support the development of pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge through mentoring partnerships. As an accountability mechanism, AC programs should use state teacher standards as benchmarks to first assess candidates' needed growth areas and establish in-service professional development strategies for their teachers. As candidates complete the program, these same standards can be used to evaluate their performance as teachers. As described, every AC program would establish an Individual Education Plan for each teacher candidate who enters the program. Once candidates show evidence of meeting state teacher standards they would be eligible for a state teacher license. This program design holds AC agencies accountable to their partners for the teachers they produce via these standards.

The second set of accountability standards for alternative certification programs is through mandated state assessments of student learning. These assessments are designed to hold schools and districts but are tantamount to holding teachers accountable for student learning. As such, alternative certification programs should be accountable to their partners for the teachers they produce via these assessments. Student assessment results could shed light on the effectiveness of alternatively certified teachers and the programs they complete.

These two sets of accountability standards minimize differences between traditionally prepared and alternatively certified teachers. Teacher candidates who participate in these types of alternative certification program partnerships have the potential to improve student learning, which should result in a narrowing of the gap in student achievement.

Implementation Issues

McLaughlin (1987) points out, "implementation dominates outcomes" (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 172). This is because policies are continually mediated as they intersect policies at other levels and local practice. As such, any program or policy recommendation is never certain in its consequences. These statements direct our attention to the objectives of Title I and implementation issues associated with these alternative certification program recommendations.

Title I policy objectives are clear; reduce the achievement gap between high-poverty low performing schools and their more wealthy high-performing counterparts. The policy recommendations suggested in this paper cut a path to the core of this goal. This path is two fold: open alternative pathways into the teaching profession and maintain support for newly inducted AC teachers through a network of mentors and educational coursework.

Pressure for states and local districts to comply is built into the policy recommendations and supported by testing mandates. However, as McLaughlin (1987) notes, "pressure by itself may be sufficient when policy objectives contain their own implementation directions" (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 173). As such, five implementation issues need to be addressed if the objectives of this policy are to be recognized.

First and foremost is the issue of time. Quality teachers are needed in classrooms immediately. However, policy "successful performance... is ultimately a matter of electoral politics" (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988, p. 5). The initial stages of implementation (e.g., opening

doors for AC programs into states and local school districts) may occur quickly but an assessment of the teachers produced, and subsequent student learning, will not be available for some time. This creates a tension with elected officials desiring visible results within their term of office. The six-year ESEA reauthorization schedule may limit this tension.

A second implementation issue arises when AC teachers are concentrated in already high-poverty low performing schools. While research on the ability of AC programs to place teachers in these high need areas is promising, long term studies on their ability to raise student achievement levels have yet to be performed. Wilson, Floden & Ferrini-Mundy (2001) point out, "This raises the possibility that poorly conceptualized or administered alternative routes may simply exacerbate inequalities in schooling that already exist" (Wilson et al., 2001, p.28). This suggests the need to annually review the effectiveness of alternatively certified teachers by correlating annual student assessment results with the percentage of these teachers working in each school.

The third implementation issues surfaces from the underlying assumption that states and districts have the organizational capacity to design, orchestrate and implement AC programs. Earlier in this paper, I presented examples of AC programs. I purposely avoided prescribing the perfect AC program because of the complicating contextual issues associated with different state and district needs. In the end however, it "may not matter *which* alternative program is implemented as much as *how* the program is integrated into the district" (Kwiatkowski, 1999, p. 13). As such, states and districts should closely examine how model AC programs are integrated into similar settings and exercise care when implementing innovative AC programs with unsubstantiated teacher quality results.

A fourth implementation issue addresses the transferability of alternatively certified teachers to other states. Currently thirty-one states utilize the INTASC standards as a basis for their state teacher license (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2000). Alternatively certified teachers receiving licenses in these states should be able to teach in other INTASC-based states. Conversely, teacher candidates in the nineteen other states, regardless of their path to certification, will encounter difficulties transferring their teacher licenses to other states.

Another implementation issue is likely to surface at the local level. Altering the basic structure of how teachers are prepared and accepted into the teaching profession is not an easy feat. AC programs present a change in how the public and other teachers conceptualize teacher development. Stigmas may be attached to alternatively certified teachers by traditionally prepared teachers in the school setting. As stated earlier, AC programs and their graduates are often viewed as deterrents to the teacher professionalization agenda. Implementation, as a "conception of bargaining and transformation...highlights individuals rather than institutions and frames central implementation issues in terms of individual actors' incentives, beliefs, and capacity" (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 175). This suggests AC program partnerships be encouraged to embrace the talents of master teachers as mentors. This positions traditionally prepared quality teachers as leaders and may offer alternatively certified teachers the critical support needed during the induction phase of their program.

Each of the five issues addressed above has the potential to impede the implementation of Title I AC programs. However, incorporating implementation guidelines for the various actors increases the viability of AC programs as a means of improving instructional capacity and student achievement.

Conclusions and Implications for Research

The evidence is clear; students in high-poverty low achieving schools are not achieving at the same level as students in high resource schools. This gap in student learning is correlated with the instructional capacity of schools and districts. Quality teachers are certified. They have the pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge needed to offer high quality instruction that produces student learning. Improving the instructional capacity of low-poverty schools starts by placing certified and qualified teachers into these settings. Fenstermacher (1990) summarizes, "Carefully designed alternative certification programs offer a way to deal with teacher shortages that are superior to the granting of emergency certificates" (Fenstermacher, 1990, p. 181). The Title I policy changes provide incentives for states and districts to develop the AC program partnerships to supply this needed component of student learning.

Student learning should not be held hostage by the lack of certified and qualified teachers. Title I of the ESEA can be used to leverage instructional capacity building policies into action. Nonetheless, it is important to remember, "institutional and political factors influence the rate and quality of conceptual innovation and determine which among the available proposals will be selected for actual use" (Majone, 1989, p. 166). The policy proposals outlined in this paper incorporate actors at each level of implementation. Doing so reduces policy congestion and increases the potential for policy success. Teacher candidates who attend alternative certification programs, supported by master teachers within their assigned school setting, have the potential to improve student learning.

These Title I funded alternative certification program recommendations are not the end all to reducing the student achievement gap. Research should continue to examine effective

components of AC programs. In addition, as teacher educators refine their conception of teacher development, research should continue to compare traditionally prepared and alternatively certified teachers to ascertain program characteristics that may be fruitfully combined.

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